



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

MERCANTILE REPORTS *of the CHARACTER and RESULTS of the TRADE of the UNITED KINGDOM during the YEAR 1858 ; with a Reference to the Progress of PRICES, 1851-9. Compiled by the EDITOR.*

CONTENTS:

	PAGE		PAGE
I.— <i>Grain Trade and Grain Crops in Europe</i>	76	VI.— <i>Woollen, Linen, and Carpet Trades: Prospective Rise in Wages</i>	91
II.— <i>Colonial and Tropical Produce: Tea, Coffee, Sugar, Fruits, Spices, Tobacco</i>	78	VII.— <i>Shipping: Freight Market, Prices of Tonnage</i>	92
III.— <i>Raw Materials: Wool, Silk, Oils, Timber, Leather</i>	80	VIII.— <i>Foreign and Colonial Loans negotiated in London</i>	95
IV.— <i>Metals: Iron and Tin</i>	85	IX.— <i>Summary of Results—Prices since 1851</i>	96
V.— <i>Cotton Trade: Imports, Consumption, Prices, and Prospects</i>	87		

At the close of a year marked by so many important commercial changes as 1858, it is desirable to preserve a record of the character and results of the Trade of the twelvemonths; and this record will possess the greater value if drawn from the series of careful and elaborate circulars issued, in the course of business, by many eminent Houses on the last day of the year. We shall then have before us a statement of results by many independent witnesses, each conversant with his own branch, and addressing himself, for a purely business purpose, to his own immediate correspondents. The following extracts have accordingly been collected:

I.—*Grain Trade and Grain Crops in Europe.*

The following review of the course of the Grain Markets in 1858, and of their present position, is from Messrs. Horne and Watney, of London:—

“The Wheat Crop of 1858 has fully borne out its reputation as the largest and finest crop on record. The last extremely hot and dry summer (1858), which produced, as usual in this moist island, another abundant wheat harvest, and prevented a recurrence of the Potato disease, has, on the other hand, caused in Spain, Portugal, the Italian States, Germany, Poland, and parts of Russia, small or very deficient crops of wheat, and decidedly so of spring corn, pulse, and grass. Farmers in the centre of Germany foreseeing the want of provender, have disposed of nearly all their Cattle, which circumstance must hereafter show its ill effects in the produce of the land. The consuming powers of Great Britain, under the present continuing low range of prices, with the manufacturing and labouring population well employed at good wages, and with her ever increasing number of bread-eaters, must be enormous. Since the introduction of Free Trade many granaries have become ‘sufferance wharves,’ and as nearly all of them now land all descriptions of goods, there was a great want of room for grain towards the close of the year, and some

parties were compelled to sell ex-ship, the repetition of which, on a declining market, caused a greater fall in prices than other circumstances justified. France has again extended the period for free exportation of grain to the end of September, 1859, thereby showing her confidence in the amplitude of her supplies up to another harvest, and, considering present prices sufficiently tempting, she has since ordered Bakers to keep three months' reserve stock of wheat and flour, equal to fully two million quarters of wheat. America has again to complain of a deficient and very inferior wheat crop; and she will only supply us should our prices rise considerably above their present level.

"The fine quality of the *Wheat Crop* of 1857 induced farmers not to press off their stocks, even at comparatively good prices, until that of 1858 was fairly secured; but as soon as all chances for a rise disappeared they commenced deliveries in earnest, and since harvest there has been a more liberal supply of old English than for many years previously, which has continually undersold fine foreign, and caused it to be at relatively high prices and a dragging trade up to the present moment. We have also had our full quantity of new English, which has been relatively cheaper than any other description for this market, although at many of the outports the new French wheat, the quality of which is much approved, has found favourable markets.

Importations of Foreign into the United Kingdom have been large and regular throughout the whole year, and considerably in excess of any twelve months except 1853, when the total was 4,949,314 qrs., and when the imperial weekly average price rose from 45s. 11d. per qr in January to 73s. 9d. in November (1853). But of the last twelve months' supply to the United Kingdom, the proportion received into London has been unusually small, only 657,737 against 1,308,919 qrs. in 1853. The last imperial weekly average in 1858 was 40s. against 35s. 6d. in October, (1857)—and 38s. 7d. for the year 1851:—and against 32s. 2d. in October, (1852)—and 41s. for the year 1852, the lowest periods of the present century, the latter crop being badly sprouted. The average for the year 1858 was 44s. 5·9d. The average fall from January, 1858, is 8s. on English, but on Foreign only from 3s. to 5s., according to quality. The low relative value has caused farmers to use large quantities of the inferior qualities for feeding purposes, and a small portion has been taken for malting. The stock in granary at this port is decidedly small.

"The *Barley Crop* in England varies much in quantity, according to locality, but proves, on the whole, to be nearer an average than was expected at time of harvest, although it is, undoubtedly, a short crop. In Scotland the crop is large, heavy in weight, but coarse and generally much discoloured; in Denmark and Sweden good in quality and quantity; in France, Belgium, Germany, Egypt, Algeria, Spain, &c., districts whence we have been accustomed to draw supplies, the crops are very small. From the Black Sea and Danube accounts were at one time unfavourable as to quantity and quality, but we incline to the opinion that with fair prices we shall again receive a quantity approaching the supplies of the last two years; the quality of that already arrived is certainly not so fine as that of the last two years. Our Foreign arrivals into the United Kingdom in the last twelve months, although about 100,000 qrs. less than the enormous quantity of the previous twelve months, have, nevertheless, been larger than in any other year (the previous year excepted), thereby proving the great deficiency in our crops of this grain, caused by the smallness of the breadth of land under this cultivation, and by the dryness of the last two seasons. We have received into this port a larger quantity than at any previous time. The average fall since January is only 2s. per qr. The highest yearly average was 43s. 11d. in 1847, and the lowest 23s. 5d. in 1850; that for the year just finished was 34s. 9·58d. The stock in granary is moderate.

"In England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany, there are again unusually

small crops of *Oats*, in consequence of the extremely dry hot season. In Scotland, good in quantity and quality. From Ireland accounts are satisfactory as to quality and quantity. Sweden and Denmark have had fine harvests, both in quantity and quality, and they will doubtless ship away all they can, as they will be glad, after the late severe panic in those countries, to bring back as much bullion, or its representative in produce, as possible. From Russia accounts vary very much; but after the experience of the last two years we may judge that at 23*s.* to 25*s.* per qr. here an almost indefinite quantity can be sent, except in cases of a decided failure of crops here.

II.—*Colonial and Tropical Produce :—Tea, Coffee, Sugar, Fruits, Spices, Tobacco.*

The following is from the Circular of Messrs. Joseph Travers and Sons, of London :—

“*Tea.*—At the commencement of 1858 prices partially recovered the panic of 1857, not, however, reaching the value then attained of 1*s.* 2½*d.* for Common Congou; but throughout January and the following months this description and the grades above it advanced 2½*d.* per lb. from the lowest point in the previous November, with every prospect of a steady market. In April, however, the report that there was a large quantity of old tea in the neighbourhood of Canton caused holders, who had hitherto been very firm, to make concessions, and prices immediately declined 2*d.* to 3*d.* per lb. for the medium grades of Congou, the finer descriptions (very high cost teas), which had previously been tenaciously held, declining still further, and entailing heavy loss on the importers.

“From this time until July we had a heavy dragging market, merchants conceding and dealers acting cautiously, until, on the 27th of that month, we received intelligence of the taking of the forts in the Peiho River, when the downward tendency was temporarily arrested, Common Congou having in the meantime receded to 9¼*d.* to 9½*d.*

“The operations of the Allied Forces, as is known, have resulted in a favourable treaty with the Chinese, and there was every prospect of trade being uninterruptedly resumed at Canton and other ports. This at first had a depressing tendency, but subsequent information has shown us that it must be some time before any great benefits can accrue to us from the late war.

“During the remaining portion of the year business has been steadier, and we commence the new year with every prospect of a remunerative trade. Our Stock is in manageable compass, and as far as can yet be learnt, there is no prospect of a greater importation of Tea than our wants will require.

“*Coffee*—in common with all other produce, fell during the latter portion of 1857, the reduction on native Ceylon being from 10*s.* to 12*s.*, and on plantation kinds fully 20*s.* During the month of January of the past year a rapid reaction of 6*s.* to 8*s.* took place. A temporary check was, however, received during February, and prices receded 2*s.* to 3*s.* A trifling advance was established during March, with a limited demand, the majority of purchasers waiting the result of the sale, which reduced the value of native Ceylon 4*s.* to 5*s.*, and plantation from 2*s.* to 3*s.* During May the trade were the principal operators, and, notwithstanding that the quantity brought forward was very great, the average price obtained was fully equal to the previous quotation. This improvement was maintained through June and July, during which time a very large business was transacted, the exports being greater than in any previous season. In August the Dutch sale again attracted attention, the quantity advertised for September being 700,000 bags. Owing to the great scarcity of coloury descriptions, the home trade continued to be steady buyers

at the current rates, and the whole quantity for sale in Holland was sold at an advance of 3s. to 4s. The shipments were again considerable up to the middle of October, when a *sudden check* was experienced from a further and unexpected sale of 1,000 casks Plantation in Holland at Prices showing from 2s. to 3s. reduction. Since that time there has been no disposition on the part of exporters to purchase, and the trade, having bought freely at the previous advance, have not until quite lately been inclined to operate. Latterly the long continuance of adverse winds has prevented the arrival of considerable quantities overdue, allowing the trade time to reduce their stocks; and owing to this circumstance our more recent sales have gone off with a spirit that might not have been expected, and a recovery of fully 1s. has taken place. We think this improvement is likely to continue, the continental accounts being better than for some time past.

"*Sugar.*—There has been a remarkable increase of Consumption, and a slight diminution (10,000 to 12,000 tons) in our general stocks. The estimate of the increase in consumption is, in round figures, 90,000 tons, giving an increase of revenue of upwards of 1,000,000*l.* sterling—a most gratifying proof, despite many adverse circumstances, of the sound condition of the country. This immense increase in our consumption has more than absorbed the large additional Production that high prices have attracted to our markets, and it is to be remarked that—in the absence of speculation—so equally have supply and demand adjusted themselves *throughout the year, that the fluctuations of the general market have rarely exceeded 1s.* One feature in the market is worthy of observation, although its influence will as yet be only indirectly felt by the grocers—viz., the importation of *Beetroot Raw Sugar*, which, to the extent of some 17,000 tons, has been used principally by the provincial refiners. But even to this small extent it has tended to check an advance in our markets, particularly in October and November, when, from long prevalence of adverse winds, our supplies ran short. As regards the future, the accounts of the present Crops are generally favourable, and we may expect in the coming year far larger supplies from the East, which will probably compensate for any diminution from other sources. It can hardly be expected that the same ratio of increase in consumption can be maintained; but under the present circumstances of the country we may fairly calculate on a steady and continuous demand. The general stock of Sugar at home and abroad is not certainly in excess, and we do not, therefore, anticipate for the present any material alteration in the value of this article.

"*Fruit.*—The general improvements in trade during the past twelve months, after the reaction from the high prices of war to the low prices of peace, have not been less marked in this department than in others; and we have to congratulate our customers on the more fair rate of profit they are now obtaining, the large increase in consumption of many fruits, and the absence of any great fluctuations in prices, so ruinous to those who have to obtain higher rates from the public than those to which it is accustomed.

"*Spices.*—At the commencement of the past year there was a brisk demand for all descriptions, and prices generally improved, partially recovering the heavy fall caused by the panic at the close of 1857; but from the continued large imports *the rise in price was not maintained; most articles are now lower than at the corresponding period last year.* It is, however, pleasing to find that low prices have caused a considerable increase in deliveries both for home consumption and exportation, and we look with confidence to a large demand during the spring."

And the following by Mr. Horatio N. Davis:—

"*Tobacco.*—The stock of United States' growth in first hands in the free markets of Europe on the opening of the year 1858 was 13,576 hhds. below an

average of the nine preceding, which, with a conviction that the excess in the crop of 1857 would be absorbed by the French and other Government monopolies, imparted confidence in the maintenance of a good range of prices until the extent of the production in 1858 could be ascertained. In the spring it was known attempts were made to raise a large crop, but extreme drought in Virginia, and a long continuation of wet weather in the Western States, caused the result to be problematical, and prices in most markets did not experience much variation until the autumn, when a fair average crop was safely housed, and then they receded. At New Orleans the contractors for France and Spain were the most important operators during the season, and extensive transactions were also entered into at Baltimore and in Virginia, which justified the opinion entertained at the commencement of the year that the excess would be required to make up the deficiencies in the South of Europe.

"The distribution of the supplies to the north of Europe was 4,500 hhds. less than in the former year, but to the south of Europe 36,700 hhds. more, and to Great Britain 3,500 more, and this explains how great was the deficiency in the Southern markets, which have yet to receive a great part of the remaining stock of 20,000 hhds. at New Orleans in completion of their requirements. The present stock in Europe shows an increase of 4,503 hhds. over that of the former year, and the excess is in the United Kingdom occasioned chiefly by the larger receipt of strips. To the existing stock in Europe and America must be added the crop grown in 1858—estimated at 192,000 hhds.—to meet the consumption which, taken at the usual standard, will leave the stock low before another crop yet to be grown can be made available. It may be observed the crop last secured is estimated at 40,000 hhds. less than the former one proved to be. Had it been extensive, prices must necessarily have declined materially from the elevated point they had attained under the influence of scarcity occasioned by increased consumption over production; but, as it is expected not far to exceed a fair average one, it is probable that prices for the better grades will not experience any important change until it can be known what efforts will be made to cultivate Tobacco this year."

III.—*Raw Materials :—Wool, Silk, Oils, Timber.*

Messrs. Hughes and Ronald, of Liverpool, say—

"*Wool.*—As regards the home demand for Woollen Goods the activity noticed in our last report has been fully maintained throughout the whole of the present year (1858), and has been still further stimulated under the influence of an early and abundant harvest; consequently the population employed in this important branch of manufacture have been better off than most of those engaged in other departments of our staple industry. In the Export of Woollen Goods the late panic was severely felt, limiting the demand in all markets abroad, while the reduced exports have greatly aggravated the distress of the shipping interest, and, as the crisis was the most severe in the United States, which is our best and largest customer, the falling off in shipments has been chiefly to that quarter. The revival in trade was more gradual there than with us, but, as business is now established on a sound footing, we look with confidence to an expanding trade to that and all other markets. It is with very great pleasure we refer to the very marked improvement which has manifested itself during the last few months in the Bradford district, so long suffering from prostration, which has now resumed its wonted appearance of busy activity.

"In the Fine Clothing Trade a steady business has been done, and from the caution exercised there has been no accumulation of goods, so that on the whole the

course of trade has been very satisfactory. The same remarks may for the most part be applied to the Flannel and Hosiery Trade. On the other hand, in the Blanket and Carpet districts, the state of business has been very discouraging during a great part of the year, and they have suffered in a particular degree from the interruption in our export trade, chiefly with the United States. Matters are certainly looking better now, but we fear it will be some time before we are able to report any very decided improvement.

"As the Wool Trade was the last to feel the effects of the crisis, so also it was the first to show signs of vitality, and as soon as Home Wools were in the market, the trade having driven themselves very bare of stocks, there was a complete rush to secure them, and a consequent opening at a fair advance upon the previously current rates. This at once induced growers to raise their pretensions, and a considerable advance was soon paid. The same activity has prevailed ever since, and we scarcely remember any former period when the advance has been more decided and continuous, a result brought about altogether by the legitimate requirements of the trade, without any excitement of speculation.

"It cannot be doubted that but for the late panic English Wools would have reached most extravagant rates last spring, and it may appear strange that, notwithstanding the ordeal the trade has since passed through, prices should now be in many cases nearly as high and even higher than before that period. This being the case thus early in the season, and taking in account the existing scarcity of the raw material, together with the cheapness of food and the low rate of money, there is little room to doubt that before next clip, in the ordinary course of events, a very high range will be established.

"The Wool Import from Australia for the year exhibits only a small increase, and confirms the opinion frequently before expressed that the growth of Wool in these colonies has received a decided check, which is very much to be regretted, as these descriptions are peculiarly suited for our home manufacturers, and the demand has been each year increasing on the Continent. The general description of the last clip does not afford an opportunity for favourable comment, the most important feature being the increase of burr both in the Sydney and Victoria districts. There has also been a great increase in the quantity sent home in the grease, which has, no doubt, arisen from unavoidable circumstances, but we do not by any means consider this objectionable, although washed wools are generally in more favour with the home trade. This is a point on which we must allow the growers to be the best judges, and, as far as opportunities permit they will, no doubt, send the wools in such condition as from experience they find to yield the best result.

"New Zealand Wools continue to show the same healthy growth, and are in consequence much appreciated."

Messrs. Durant and Co., of London, say, as regards Silk:—

"*Silk*.—The year (1859) opens with a buoyant feeling—not a matter of surprise, seeing that all are doing fairly well, and that our stock of China Silk, now more than ever the great staple of consumption, is reduced to little more than two months' deliveries. Still the occurrences of the past year ought to induce caution: twice during that period did our market suddenly halt and reel back after a too rapid upward movement; once in February, when emerging from the sad depression of the previous year, prices had jumped up 25 per cent., and again in October, when with less rapidity, and perhaps more apparent reason, they had again advanced 20 per cent. with the landing of the new Silk from China. In February and March we fell back, and lost fully one-half of the rebound of January, and there remained, with occasional slight alternations, for months, actually selling large quantities in July

and even in August, at barely $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. above the very lowest prices of the depression in December of the previous year. In October we halted as suddenly, and lost even more rapidly one-half of the advance—and it is only just now, after a month of almost entire absence of arrivals, that we find prices at the point whence they fell—*just half way between the extreme lowest rates of the panic and the highest prices of the follies of 1857*. Could we but remain here we might reasonably calculate upon a large and extended trade; but this is almost too much to expect. A stock of only two months' consumption and an easy money market are sad temptations, even although it is known that 20,000 bales are afloat and under despatch, more than half of which are close upon our shores; and it is more than probable, that with the aid of the overland route, we may have a supply of 8,000 to 10,000 bales per month up to the end of June. True, there is the bitter experience of 1857, with all its severity, forcing itself upon our memory, but in the buoyancy of the moment much of this will probably be forgotten. All looks well now.

“That sad accumulation of stock with which the market was so overwhelmed last year, and which then seemed almost inexhaustible, has all vanished. Manufactured goods, both here and on the Continent, are in good demand, *and for the moment the powers of production seem scarcely adequate to supply incoming orders*. But such has been before. Who can tell what will have been the effect in China of our largely increased deliveries and rapid rise reported by the September and October mails? and who can say that, deplorably threatening as are the prospects for the next European raccolto, we may not see a change, and have once more a return to something like the ordinary production?”

“The result of 1858 was fairly satisfactory, perhaps more so than could have been expected, seeing the point whence we started; for, although some few fancied they saw light and ground of hope in the vast thinning that had taken place among the reckless, and the extreme caution and even timidity of the most judicious, the general opinion was against the chance of much good to be done in 1858—and for many months too fully were these doubts and opinions justified—month after month we had to report “dragging and unsatisfactory trade,” and it was not till the fears as to the repetition of the failure in the European crop were realised, and we were far advanced in the season of China imports, and found month after month the deficiency increasing, that doubt and hesitation began to vanish—and the year closed with two or three months of a general hopeful feeling—all hands preparing with spirit for the good trade they hope to find in the coming spring.

“The weight of Silk delivered, and therefore we may say consumed in 1858, was greater than in any preceding year, an increase of 25 per cent. upon 1857, and only 20 per cent. below the quantity imported in that greatest of all years of importation, and this with comparatively slow going during a large portion of the year. Of China Silk there is little to be remarked—its use is becoming more and more extended, foreigners gradually learning to adapt it to purposes hitherto unknown to them, or creating purposes to which to apply it, and surely fastening themselves upon it as a great staple of their consumption.”

Of the Oil Trade, Messrs. Wilson, Rose, Graham and Co., say:—

Oils.—“The year 1858 has proved very unsatisfactory to most branches of trade with which we are connected. Transactions have been of limited extent; there has been (and the feeling is not yet dissipated) a great want of confidence; speculative demand, too, has almost been unknown. With all the elements calculated to bring about a very different state of things, a succession of abundant harvests, money plentiful and cheap, it is therefore reasonable to anticipate a good, prosperous, and legitimate trade during the year upon which we have just entered. The production

of Linseed Oil was not very remunerative to our crushers at any period of last year, the value of the raw material having been out of proportion to the manufactured articles; the lowest price submitted to was 28*l.* per ton in February, and the highest was 34*l.* 10*s.* in July and August. We estimate our export at 24,000 tons, of which no less than 14,850 went from Hull. To-day there was a fair demand for the article at 29*l.* 15*s.* to 30*l.* on the spot, and 30*l.* 10*s.* is demanded deliverably monthly up to June. The importation of Oil Cakes was less than that in 1857 by about 20,000 tons, and the home make is also considerably short; however the deficiencies have been fully made up by the abundance and low price of grain, which has induced farmers to use their own produce, and consequently, prices have been about the same as in 1857; our present stock is 4,500 tons against 7,500 tons last year.

“Of Rape and Oil seeds 199,456 qrs. were imported here, of which 139,500 were from the East Indies. Our exports were correspondingly large, and amounted to 121,636. The extreme range in prices during the year was 52*s.* in January for Calcutta Rape, and 61*s.* in August; to-day 53*s.* to 54*s.* is the value.

“Rape and Seed Oils now take a very prominent position in our market, the consumption for burning purposes has become immense.

“Olive Oils attracted little attention during the first nine months of the last year, Gallipoli ruling at about 45*l.* per tun in October and November; but, reports coming from the producing countries of serious injury to the crops by worms, there was a general rush to buy, and an advance of 5*l.* per tun has taken place in consequence. Gallipoli is now worth 50*l.* Stocks throughout the country are large.

“Of Cocanut Oil the import last year was short of 1857, being 8,755 tons against 9,500; the quantity taken for export was about the same—say 5,100 against 5,470; and the home consumption 2,499, against 2,450.

“In Palm Oil the fluctuations have been very trifling.

“In Tallow, considering the speculative character of the article, fluctuations last year were inconsiderable, the extremes being 56*s.* per cwt. for Petersburg yellow candle in March, and 48*s.* 6*d.* in August; to-day we quote it at 51*s.* 3*d.* on the spot, and 51*s.* first three months.

“No better index as to the activity which has prevailed in our Manufacturing Districts can be afforded than the consumption of Sperm Oil, now solely used for spindles and other fine machinery. We commenced last year with a stock of 1,750 tuns, the import was 3,700 (of which 2,700 were from the United States), and our stocks are now only 517, showing an actual consumption of 4,933 tuns, the largest known for many years, which will account for the gradual and great advance in value all throughout the year. In January 68*l.* per tun was accepted; in June it was worth 87*l.*; and to-day fine parcels would readily command 92*l.* The trade in Common Oils has been a very dragging one, Seed Oils having taken their place for burning purposes.”

Messrs. Churchill and Sim, of London, say of the Timber Trade:—

“At the present time the usual custom is followed of reviewing the trade in Wood for the past year (1858). The course of trade had been grievously checked, in some branches almost paralyzed, during the commercial crisis of the closing months of 1857, bearing most severely on our relations with America and the north of Europe. The new supply had gained on us, while the demand had slackened, so that, at the beginning of the year 1858 the stock of Wood was found to be very large, and the scale of prices very low. In the spring there were indications of vitality, low prices always encouraging the liberal use of Wood, so that by the time

the importation recommenced a deep impression had been made on the stock. Though the import of Wood in 1858 had been less than in 1857, yet, taken in conjunction with the excess of that year, it proved to be ample for the demand of the country, and leaves us with a moderate surplus for consumption in the intervening months when supply ceases."

The following Tabular Statement gives the leading facts as regards London:—

TIMBER.—Imports in London, '56-8.

From	1858.	1857.	1856.
Norway and Sweden <i>tons</i>	167,000	161,000	175,000
Russia and Finland ,,	65,	74,	64,
Germany ,,	85,	98,	77,
	317,000	333,000	316,000
British America ,,	118,	164,	115,
Afr., U. S., E. & W. Ind. ,,	37,	31,	17,
	472,000	528,000	448,000

Consumption in London.

Sawn Wood—Deals, battens, } and boards <i>pieces</i> }	6,973,000	6,134,000	6,778,000
Hewn Wood..... <i>loads</i>	218,	190,	185,

Stock in London on 31st December.

Deals—Foreign <i>pieces</i>	1,480,000	1,622,000	1,661,000
,, Colonial ,,	2,148,	2,522,	1,747,

Messrs. Powell and Co., of London, report of the

Leather Trade.—"Early in 1858 the *Leather* market was long unsettled. It was many months before any confidence was felt that prices had reached the lowest point; and not until the first half of the year had elapsed were we able to report greater firmness, and no depreciation in value. This was succeeded by a decided advance in almost all articles, which continued for about two months; since that period the market has shown some degree of weakness.

"In *Raw Goods* the fall in prices was not more rapid. In January (1858), salted River Plate Hides reached the minimum quotation of the year, $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb., and almost all other articles met a corresponding decline. Some reaction almost immediately followed; but excepting River Plate Hides, it was not long maintained.

In *April* Rio Grande Hides were sold at their lowest point, $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb.; and our quotations in *May* show a further reduction in many articles.

"A large Export Demand, chiefly for the United States, combined with increased confidence on the part of the Home Manufacturer, now assisted the market. Stock became much reduced, and continuously advancing prices were realised for almost all articles until the month of *October*, since which period the tendency has been *downward*."

IV.—*Metals:—Iron and Tin.*

From Mr. William Colvin, of Glasgow, comes the following review of the Scotch Iron Trade in 1858 :—

Scotch Iron Trade.—"During the year 1858, Pig-Iron has fluctuated only 8*s.* per ton (from 52*s.* to 60*s.*), the trade having been characterized throughout by remarkable steadiness and a comparative freedom from speculative influence. The average price for the 12 months is 54*s.* 4*d.* In January the market opened at 53*s.* 6*d.*, with considerable inquiry for spring shipment, and the price gradually advanced with slight occasional fluctuation till the beginning of March, when it reached 60*s.* for mixed numbers warrants. Although within this period the rate of discount had been reduced by the Bank of England from 8 per cent. to 3 per cent.; and some departments of business had shown symptoms of revival from the late depression, foreign demand and local consumption did not realize general expectation, and when it became evident that stocks were still accumulating, in the height of our shipping season a downward tendency ensued, holders became willing sellers, following the market till the price touched 52*s.* on the 21st of April, from which, however, a reaction of 1*s.* 6*d.* to 2*s.* soon took place, the low price having again stimulated exports, and attracted the attention of parties seeking investment.

"For the last eight months there has been but little movement of interest or importance, the price oscillating between 52*s.* 3*d.* and 56*s.*, in fluctuations of 3*d.* to 1*s.* per ton, according to the preponderance of buyers or sellers at the moment. The present moderate price of Pig-Iron and value of money justify the expectation of a good spring trade, but it must not be overlooked that existing stocks and present production are amply sufficient to meet any probable demand. At present the market closes steadily at 54*s.* 6*d.* cash for mixed numbers warrants. All No. 1 g. m. b. may be quoted 53*s.* 6*d.*; No. 3, 53*s.*; No. 1 Collness, 54*s.*; No. 1 Calder, 54*s.* 6*d.*; No. 1 Glengarnock, 54*s.* 6*d.*; Gartsherrie, 59*s.* cash against bill of lading.

"The average number of furnaces in blast for the 12 months has been 128. At present there are 131 in active operation. The production has again exceeded that of any previous year, and, notwithstanding shipments being also in excess and local consumption moderate, stocks have increased to 340,000 tons, of which there are in store 150,000, the balance in makers' hands.

Our Exports to	1858.	1857.	1856.	1855.
United States tons	51,600	42,200	56,100	57,200
British North America ,,	8,300	15,300	13,600	6,600
France ,,	52,400	67,700	63,300	66,800
Germany ,,	52,800	81,800	55,000	48,200

“Manufactured Iron was dull of sale in the beginning of the year, but for some months past there has been a more active demand. Present prices are,—Common bars, 7*l.* to 7*l.* 15*s.*, according to brand; plates, 8*l.* 10*s.* to 9*l.*; sheets 9*l.* 10*s.* to 10*l.*, less 4 per cent. for cash; rails, 7*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

“There is a marked falling off in our Clyde Iron Ship-building yards from their former activity.—Thus

Clyde IRON SHIP Building, '53-8.

YEAR.	Launched.		Building at end of Year.	
	No.	Tons.	No.	Tons.
1858	60	40,522	34	18,463
57	98	57,417	56	38,845
56	103	58,627	64	47,657
55	107	84,750	57	37,850
54	129	70,530	54	47,390
53	79	54,750	97	61,200

“Allow me to call your attention to the subjoined table, which will enable you to compare the state of the trade at this period for the past four years:—

SCOTCH IRON TRADE.—Comparative Statement, '55-8.

	1855.	1856.	1857.	1858.
Foreign Shipments for Year <i>tons</i>	249,000	259,500	294,000	273,600
Coastwise	293,000	247,600	233,500	291,400
	542,000	507,100	527,500	565,000
Stock, 31st December	100,000	90,000	190,000	340,000
Furnaces in blast, ditto	No. 121	123	123	131
Price of Pig-Iron ditto... <i>per ton</i>	75 <i>s.</i>	74 <i>s.</i>	52 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	54 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>
Bank rate of Discount, ditto.....	6½ per cent.	6 per cent.	8 per cent.	2½ per cent.
Average Price for the Year.....	70 <i>s.</i> 9 <i>d.</i>	72 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	69 <i>s.</i> 2 <i>d.</i>	54 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i>
Make of Malleable iron	<i>tons</i> 110,000	125,000	100,000	90,000
Avg. Price of Bars for the year	£8 12 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	£9	£8 10 <i>s.</i>	£7 10 <i>s.</i>

From Thomas Thorburn, of Glasgow, also comes the following Report on the same important branch of industry:—

“After five years of great prosperity, there has followed a period of depression in the Iron Trade. At the opening of the year a hopeful feeling prevailed that the

low prices then engendered by the commercial crisis of 1857 would promote an extensive demand; large purchases were made at from 53*s.* to 57*s.* per ton, and the price gradually rose to 60*s.* by the middle of March; but it being obvious that the make was continuing considerably in excess of the total deliveries, a quick reaction set in, the price declined to 52*s.* 6*d.* by the end of April, and has since fluctuated between 53*s.* and 56*s.* for mixed numbers. Although these quotations were unremunerative to the ironmasters generally, and calculated to curtail the production, still the Pig-Iron produced in the year just closing reached the immense quantity of 945,000 tons, which at the average price for the year represents a total value of 2,554,000*l.* sterling. Of this there were consumed, and exported foreign and coastwise, 810,000 tons. It will thus be perceived that the stocks, which are now 295,000 tons in warehousekeepers' and makers' stores, have increased 135,000 tons in the year.

"This accumulation is chiefly owing to the cessation of one of our largest malleable iron works, and a falling-off in the exports to the Colonies, the United States, and the continent of Europe. Whilst the foreign shipments exhibit a decrease of 54,000 tons, and the local consumption of 59,000 tons, the exports coastwise show an increase of 84,000 tons, when compared with 1857. Meanwhile the foundries, engineering, and malleable iron works on the Clyde are manifesting signs of approaching activity, which will be further strengthened and consolidated by the decided and perceptible revival now happily begun in the general trade of the country. Taking into account the smallness of stocks abroad, and those here being only equal to four months' requirements, and with the price about 10*s.* per ton below the average of the last fourteen years, whilst the cost of production, as is well known, is considerably enhanced, and with undoubted indications of a brisk spring trade, it is scarcely possible to form an estimate of the increased demand that must arise for Iron—the use of which is the great test of material advancement, inasmuch as it enters into all work, agricultural and manufacturing, buildings, railways, and shipping, whether for commerce or for war."

The following relates to the Tin Trade, and is from the Circular of 31st Dec. 1858, of Von Dadelszen and North:—

"The scarcity of the Tin Ore suitable for making refined Tin, and also the small quantity of black sand which has arrived, smaller even than might have been anticipated from last year's arrivals, have caused the smelters to consume a large quantity both of Straits and Banca Tin in manufacturing refined, thereby giving an increased impetus to the foreign market. The only drawback to a still further advance in the price of Tin is the present unsatisfactory state of the Tin Plate manufacture; for while the raw material has increased in price, the demand for the manufactured article has been slack, and the prices obtained unremunerative. The accounts from the United States, the great mart for Tin Plates, are extremely depressing; they complain of large stocks, and a sluggish demand from the interior. It is to be hoped that the spring trade there may open more favourably; ere long to be reciprocated by a healthier tone in the state of our own trade here."

V.—Cotton Trade:—Imports, Consumption, Prices, and Prospects — Prospective Rise in Wages.

Messrs. Hollingshed, Tetley, and Co's. (Manchester), annual review is as follows:—

"*The Cotton Trade.—Liverpool, Dec. 31.*—In presenting our annual report concerning the Cotton Trade, we have to remark that the American crop proved to

be quite as large as had been anticipated, and owing to reduced shipments to continental markets, and the great falling off in the consumption of America, the quantity available for this country has been greatly increased, and has amounted to 58 per cent. of the whole crop.

“Import.”—Notwithstanding the greatly increased supply from America, nearly 10 per cent. more of the crop having reached this country than in either of the two preceding years, the total import varies but little from that of last year, owing to the great falling off from India, and also from Brazil. From America we have received 1,863,147 bales, against 1,481,715 bales in 1857; from Brazil 106,127 bales, against 168,340 bales in 1857; from West Indies, &c., 6,772 bales, against 11,467 in 1857; from Egypt 105,603 bales, against 75,598 bales in 1857; and from India 360,980 bales, against 680,466 bales in 1857. The total import being 2,442,629 bales, against 2,417,586 bales in 1857, and 2,468,869 bales in 1856, the largest previous import.

“Export.”—The export has been large, particularly of American Cotton, the total quantity shipped to continental ports having amounted to 348,600 bales, against 337,250 bales in 1857, and 358,700 bales in 1856.

“Consumption.”—The greatly reduced Consumption at the close of last year has no doubt beneficially affected the Cotton trade, and early in the present year, what with moderate prices and restored confidence, the rate of discount having on the 7th of January been reduced to 6 per cent., and gradually down to 3 per cent. on the 11th of February, the consumption of Cotton soon began to increase, and by the month of April the spinning establishments of the country might fairly be considered at full work again. There has been no check since, owing to the immense demand that has existed for the manufactured article, both in yarn and cloth; and the shipments to the East—to India in particular—have been enormous, *amounting for some months past to nearly double the quantity usually sent.* The Consumption during the last six months has been greatly in excess of any former period, and it is still increasing; and an ample supply, with large stocks in the ports, has prevented any advance in price of the raw material.

“During the last ten years the quantity taken out of the Ports for Consumption was as follows :—

1849—1,586,000 <i>bales</i> of 395 lbs.	1854—1,947,000 <i>bales</i> of 401 lbs.
50—1,513, ,, 386 ,,	55—2,099, ,, 398 ,,
51—1,662, ,, 390 ,,	56—2,263, ,, 407 ,,
52—1,911, ,, 393 ,,	57—1,960, ,, 401 ,,
53—1,854, ,, 396 ,,	58—2,174, ,, 412 ,,

“The delivery in 1858 is 14 per cent. more than in 1857, and as the stock in the hands of spinners is about equal, this will denote the actual increase in the consumption. The consumption during the last three months of 1857 was reduced about 140,000 bales, and during the first three months of the present year about 50,000 bales, so that the consuming power of the country must be about a thousand bales per week more than appears by our tables, without taking into consideration any increased machinery recently brought into operation. Having shown the delivery for consumption reduced to bales of one uniform weight, 400 lbs., it may be useful to show what the actual Consumption in bales has been, by allowing for difference in stock in spinners’ hands at the close of the year.

“The Weekly Average Consumption, with the Stock in consumers’ hands, and in the ports, will be seen in the following statement :—

“1858 :—*Weekly Average Consumption* : American, 31,512; Brazil, 2,172; West India, 209; Egyptian, 1,722; East India, 6,203; total, 41,818.

" *Stock, Dec. 31, 1858*: Inland, 90,000; in ports, 371,980; equal to weeks' consumption, 11·5.

" *Prices*.—The year commenced with the price of Middling New Orleans at $6\frac{1}{4}d.$ per lb., which gradually advanced with an improving state of trade; and, owing to light imports during the month of February, in consequence of long continued easterly winds, the stock of American early in March was reduced to about 80,000 bales, and prices suddenly rose to nearly $8d.$ per lb. for the same class of Cotton, which was the highest point of the year. An import of upwards of 430,000 bales in the month of March brought prices down again about one penny farthing per lb.; and since then, that is for the last nine months, the fluctuations have been unimportant, the price having only ranged from a farthing under, to three-eighths of a penny per lb. over, sevenpence for middling New Orleans Cotton.

" Present prices, contrasted with last year's, will be seen as follows :—

	Upland.				Mobile.			
	Ord.	Mid.	Fair.	Fine.	Ord.	Mid.	Fair.	Fine.
	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>
31st Dec., 1858	$5\frac{3}{4}$	$6\frac{3}{4}$	7	$7\frac{1}{4}$	$5\frac{3}{4}$	$6\frac{7}{8}$	$7\frac{1}{8}$	$7\frac{3}{8}$
„ 1857	5	6	$6\frac{5}{16}$	$6\frac{1}{2}$	5	$6\frac{1}{16}$	$6\frac{3}{8}$	$6\frac{5}{8}$

" *Stocks*.—The stock in the ports, which on 1st June amounted to 745,400 bales, is now reduced to a low figure, in consequence of the very large consumption, and extensive export demand during the last four months, and this notwithstanding an import from America during the present month of upwards of 200,000 bales. In American we have 269,000 bales against 202,430 bales in 1857; in Brazil 19,000 against 36,180 in 1857; in West Indies 790 against 5,020 in 1857; in Egyptian 27,260 against 17,550 in 1857; in East India 55,860 against 191,330 in 1857; the total stock being 337,980 bales against 452,510 bales in 1857. At the present rate of consumption, supposing we receive no further supplies, and without allowing anything for export, the American would be exhausted in $8\frac{1}{2}$ weeks, the Brazil in 9 weeks, the West India in 4 weeks, the Egyptian in 16 weeks, the East India in 9 weeks; or the whole, including inland stock, in $11\frac{1}{2}$ weeks. At the close of last year the stock in the ports and inland was equal to $13\frac{3}{4}$ weeks' consumption at the average rate of that year.

" *Prospects*.—The Cotton Trade, or the manufacturing interest of the country, has not for a long period been in so satisfactory a position as it now is, and this state of prosperity has all the appearance of durability, the consuming power of the world having apparently overtaken the production, *as we no longer hear of glutted markets*, either at home or abroad.

" The demand for Textiles is at present, greater than can be supplied, and it is evident, therefore, that spinners and manufacturers are obtaining highly remunerative prices, *such as they perhaps have not obtained for nearly twenty years past*, and they have thus every inducement to increase the consumption to the utmost, and this, too, at a period when Corn is remarkably, almost unprofitably cheap, the rate of interest so low, the Bank Rate of Discount being only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., that sooner or later money, instead of being sought for, will have to seek employment.

" With prospects such as are thus indicated for an active and increased consumption, it is of more than ordinary importance to ascertain what the probabilities are for an adequate supply of the Raw Material, and here again the result appears to be

quite satisfactory. The American Crop, owing to an unusually early season, and a late frost, promises to be by far the largest ever grown, but whether it will reach 3,500,000 Bales, or considerably exceed this, remains to be seen. The receipts at the Ports, already 1,362,090 Bales, against 1,108,000 Bales in the previous large crop year 1855, would indicate an ample crop; but whatever the amount may be, a greatly reduced proportion or per centage will come to this country, the increased wants of America requiring at least 200,000 Bales more than last year, and something must be deducted for the excess in shipments which would reach European markets before the close of the present year.

“From Brazil, Egypt, and other places, we may have the usual average supply of about 240,000 Bales.

“From the East Indies we shall no doubt receive considerably more than the short supply of the present year, probably not less than the average of the last two years. The conclusion to be drawn from these remarks is, that we shall have a very large consumption, with a Supply of Cotton that may at the close of another year make some addition to a stock unprecedentedly small compared with the actual consumption.”

In the “Times” of 22nd January, 1859, there appeared a statement to the effect that a general movement was being set on foot by the Factory Operatives in the form of an address to their Employers for an Increase of Wages, founded upon the prosperous state of Trade. The document embodying the request does not enter into details, but it expresses the desires of the memorialists in respectful and appropriate language. The “Times’” article was as follows:—

“The Factory Operatives in the manufacturing districts of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire have, for some time past, contemplated a general movement for securing an increase of Wages, considering that the prosperity of the cotton trade would amply justify them in such a course. The spinners and self-actor minders have taken the initiative, and the united body representing the four counties above named have made a draught of a memorial to the employers, setting forth the views of the workers on the subject. The document may be modified according to the inclinations of the operatives at each mill before it is presented. The agitation assumes entirely the character of a request to the employers, and in many instances the amount of the advance of wages desired is not even named. The masters will be appealed to individually, and there is little doubt that in most instances the request will be conceded. In any case, a ‘strike,’ or measure of the kind, will not be resorted to. The power-loom weavers contemplate a similar movement, characterized by exactly similar means.”

Subsequent to the date of the statement other paragraphs have appeared, to the effect that at several mills the request for higher wages had been at once conceded.*

* Combined with this important subject of Wages it may be mentioned, that in the course of some correspondence in the daily newspapers on the subject of Agricultural Wages, a writer dating from near Sleaford says, that at present throughout Lincolnshire, Notts, and some of the neighbouring counties the Wages of the Agricultural Day Labourers are 1s. 8d. per day,—or say, 10s. per week.

VI.—*Woollen, Linen, and Carpet Trades.*

The "Leicester Journal" of 31st December, 1858, has the following review of the *Woollen Trade* of that town for the past year :—

"The commencement of the present year (1858) was indeed a gloomy one ; manufacturers and spinners were both standing still, and yarns, which had long been falling, opened at a serious reduction. This, however, did not induce further employment. Our Workhouse was full, and all was stagnant. The failure of Mr. Goodband in the American trade was known soon after, and created one of the greatest sensations, as well as led to the most serious loss our manufacturers had experienced. The Wool Market, which had been very much depressed, towards February began to assume a better aspect, and Cotton Yarns, having withstood any serious reduction, began to be more inquired after for the season's demand. The Money Market was easier, and through the watchfulness of our bankers, and the caution of our manufacturers and tradesmen, all fears of failures were over, and Leicester passed the storm unscathed by a single important failure, and commercial enterprise began again to feel its way, though want of employment continued to be felt most severely.

"The rottenness of the commercial system in America began in March to develop itself to its utmost extent, so that no trade was done for that market. Shopkeepers were also suffering now, their losses being great, and depression continuing so long that there was no chance of recovering them. The spring trade in April opened very briskly in London, which was the first bright spot in our commercial atmosphere. Still, improvement was gradual and employment partial, and nothing doing but to order, which was principally for the home demand. Our Wool Fair, which gave an average of 32s. 10d. per tod, established the price of yarns, and was followed by a firmness in it which has kept on until it has now reached 45s. per tod for farmers' lots. In September yarns had risen 3d. per lb. The Money Market became very easy, employment became more and more plentiful ; first one branch of our trade rallied, then another, until we were in active operation in all by the 1st of December. We now have money at 2½ per cent. by the Bank of England, bread at 5d. the quartern loaf, and our Union with over 2,000 recipients of relief fewer than last year.

"We have now a greater amount of machinery engaged in our various branches than was ever before known, and it is very much more fully employed at the present time than usual at this period of the year, while the prospects for the new year are of the most cheering character."

As regards the Carpet Trade at Kidderminster, the "Worcester Chronicle" of 31st December, 1858, says :—

"The staple trade of Kidderminster has recently much improved ; the men of one of the largest firms in the town having been making seven and a-half days a week by extra hours for several weeks past, and the business generally at other firms is very brisk. The number of persons relieved by the union is much smaller than at the corresponding period last year."

Of the Linen Trade, Messrs. D. Dewar, Son, and Sons, say :—

"With respect to the Linen Trade there is but little or no change to report from our last. The demand for goods is getting more firm, and orders are larger and more numerous ; but they cannot be met, for it is impossible to do business

under the existing state of things. Throughout the year which has just closed there has never been anything like an ample supply of the Raw Material, the deficiency in the importation of Flax at its termination being considerably over 30,000 tons. At the present moment there is an unprecedentedly small supply in hand; and it is said that the spinners who are holders of flax can make a larger profit by reselling than by spinning it. The importations for the season are now over, or nearly so; and what we are to do till the new crop comes in it is difficult to say. Yet no steps are taken to meet this evil, notwithstanding the fact that the remedy is in our own hands. What this is we have on several occasions pointed out at length.

"To India we must look for a constant supply of Flax, and upon our own energy we must depend for procuring it; for it is idle to suppose that Government should come forward to do that which we can so readily do for ourselves. If we will only prove to the Indian Government that we are in earnest, we make no doubt that it will render us all the aid which it can legitimately extend, and which we can fairly hope to obtain."

VII.—*Freight Market :—Prices of Tonnage.*

Messrs. Curray, Kellock, and Co., (Liverpool,) say of the

"*Shipping Trade.*—We regret having to record another year of diminished sales of shipping in our port as compared with the previous one, equal to about 18 per cent. The character of the business from January to December has been of that fitful yet improving kind that follows recovering health after prostration produced by severe fever and excitement. What has been done is permanent and solid, mostly arising from necessity. There has of course been some speculation, which is always the case when prices are so low as they have been, but the speculators are in good position, and able to hold such purchases at will.

"In the early part of the year there was much inquiry, and many ships changed hands at low rates, nevertheless there was the constant fear upon the minds of purchasers that large numbers of the Borough Bank's and other mortgaged ships would have been forced *en masse* on the market. This has not been so; on the contrary, much of the tonnage so circumstanced has been managed with a firm prudent hand, and we believe the most made of it that was possible. The caution thus used has tended to improve prices, and saved us from any long depression from a surfeit of second-class ships being thrust upon us. Of those held by the Bank thirty-four have been sold since its suspension, while there are only thirteen now here or in other ports of the United Kingdom, with four or five still to arrive, remaining to be disposed of. Up to the middle of April there was a tolerably steady and slightly improving trade, when, from some unexplained cause, a reaction took place and exceeding dulness followed, during which some good seven-year-class colonial ships sold as low as 5*l.* per ton. From this condition we rallied towards the end of May. This improvement continued but a short time, and in June there was almost a cessation of important business. Towards the close of July matters again improved, and have continued to do so, though very slowly, and with some unaccountable calms, until the present time. The last month has been the most steady of the year.

"The discontinuance of Guano Charters from the Chincas is being severely felt, especially by the fleet that has gone to the East in the war service. The enormous amount of tonnage that has accumulated in the Indian and China ports (about 500,000 tons) has reduced freights from thence to a nominal rate. So low as 5*s.* per ton has been accepted for steamers from Bombay.

"The expectations from the Kooria Moorla Islands have not been realised, and but little benefit has arisen to us from that quarter.

"The solution of the present unsatisfactory state of things with the shipping interest may be found in the general contraction of trade that has taken place since the late panic, combined with the fact that we have more ships than there is trade to employ them, since we have permitted the vessels of other nations to do our work, without receiving any corresponding advantage from those so much favoured.

"In considering the future prospects of shipping, the very decreased number we are likely to have at command must be regarded. With a much lessened production both in the United Kingdom and in the Colonies must be taken into account the losses of the year, which are likely to prove something enormous, we fear considerably over those of 1847, which amounted to 1,143 vessels of all sizes. The statistics for the past year are not yet completed, but from the first six months' return the number lost is likely to prove equal to four ships per day.

"Outward freights have considerably improved during the last two months, and if our India fleet does not come home too thick upon us we may calculate upon some months of good outward employment. Any indication of improvement in charters is quickly responded to by parties willing to invest.

"Ship-building in the Colonies this year has been (as we advised in our last must be expected) on a very limited scale. Nor do we think much more will be done through the year now entered upon.

"The number of Ships which have changed hands this year is 482 = 221,419 tons, against 586 = 258,869 in 1857, showing a decrease of 104 ships, or 37,450 tons, being a decline of 18 per cent. in the number of ships, and $14\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the number of tons this year against last. Of the above 51 are New British, equal to 21,702 tons; 99 new Colonial, equal to 47,966 tons; 15 foreign, equal to 8,346 tons. The number of ships sold to foreigners is 19, equal to 7,482 tons. The number of steamers sold is 39, of which 27 are screws and 12 paddle, equal to 15,097 tons.

"British ships must be quoted *fully 10 per cent. lower* at the close than they were at the commencement of the year. One or two most injudicious sales, made at altogether unnecessarily low prices, completely paralysed the buyers of good British ships for several months past. The following prices rule just now:—For London, Liverpool, and Cumberland ships, of thirteen years' class, coppered, Baltic outfit, 16*l.* to 18*l.* per ton; ditto East Coast and other country-built, 13*l.* to 15*l.* per ton. Twelve, ten, and nine years' class in proportion.

"*Iron Ships*—London, Liverpool, or Clyde, for twelve years' class, 16*l.* to 17*l.* 10*s.* Nine and six years' class in proportion. East Coast, &c., do., 14*l.* 10*s.* to 16*l.* Inferior classes in proportion.

"*New Colonial Ships*—Quebec, St. John and Richibucto, classed A for 7 years, 7*l.* to 8*l.*; Spruce, do., A 4, 4*l.* 10*s.* to 5*l.* 15*s.*; Prince Edward Island, classed A 7 years, 6*l.* to 7*l.*; Spruce, do., A 4, 7 years, 4*l.* 5*s.* to 5*l.* 10*s.* Second-hand large Colonial ships are in improving demand. Several have changed hands this month at better prices. Of second-hand British ships we have had but a small number in the market, with considerable inquiry. Some large steamers, chiefly screws, have changed hands at low prices. The stock offering for sale is large, and the buyers are few. Our present stock of vessels on sale may be classed as follows:—

"*Colonial*—20 ships varying from 1,000 to 2,000 tons; 17 ships, varying from 700 to 1,000 tons; 25 ships, varying from 400 to 700 tons; 27 ships, varying from 200 to 400 tons; 7 ships, varying from 80 to 200 tons.

"*Foreign*—3 ships, varying from 500 to 1,500 tons.

"*British*—14 ships, varying from 300 to 1,500 tons; 5 ships, varying from 150 to 300 tons; 4 ships, under 150 tons.

"Total, 122 ships; showing a decrease of 39 ships on hand against 161 last year; 12 steamers, screw and paddle, showing a decrease of 4 against 16 last year.

"By a new rule issued in the early part of the year, Lloyd's committee require that all vessels built in the Colonies must be iron kneed, strapped and classed in the hull while on the stocks, or they lose one year of their time."

And Messrs. Alfred Leaming and Co. report further—

"Since the date of our last annual circular the Shipping interest has experienced twelve months of depression altogether unparalleled within our recollection. We began the past year (1858) without being able to hold out a hope of important improvements, and the result has realized our worst anticipations, nor can we well see when and how the existing evils are to be brought to a satisfactory termination. The great evil of an excess of tonnage over and above the demand existing for it not only continues, but is vastly increased; for though fewer British ships, in proportion to the increase of trade, have been built and registered, very much larger accessions than heretofore have been furnished by other countries, of which the following Table will give evidence.

"Tonnage of British and Foreign Ships entered inward during the eleven months of 1856, 1857, and 1858:—

Ships.	1856.	1857.	1858.
	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
British	10,122,317	10,768,669	10,137,123
American	2,603,887	2,267,434	2,233,503
Other countries	3,833,967	4,616,758	4,808,958

"During the whole of 1858, without intermission, shipowners have had to contend with great reductions in homeward freights from the East, merchants having availed themselves of the opportunity for securing abroad return tonnage, for which there has not been adequate demand, owing to the discharge of a large number of Government transports on arriving out, and also to a considerable excess of our exports over our imports, in eleven months the former being 9,286,610 tons, against 7,926,905 tons of the latter; to this excess the large exportation of coals and iron has largely contributed. By the last accounts nearly 500,000 tons of Shipping were still in the East, waiting to be taken up.

"Past experience with respect to shipbuilding teaches a salutary lesson. The large Clipper Ship, which has tended to lower the rate of freights in foreign ports, has suffered greater depreciation in value from the pressure of the times than perhaps any other class of ships. In days of prosperity, when freights ruled high, Clippers realized large profits; but, on the other hand, now that freights are depressed, the loss they incur is correspondingly great, and they, as a property, have almost become unsaleable. There appears to be a growing conviction among shipowners, which is strengthened by the approbation of the merchants, that a ship of more moderate size is the more suited to the requirements of commerce, so that the majority to be constructed may hereafter be of that description; such a return to the former state of things promises to have the effect of again equalizing the

rates of freight over the world, thus replacing the shipowner in his true and legitimate position, giving him a fair return for his capital, and securing him from those great fluctuations which have rendered his property both hazardous and speculative. The employment of Screw Steamers in the Baltic has been less remunerative than in preceding years, freights both ways, especially homeward, having been very low. The Mediterranean trade has been better; for some Screw Steamers we have found permanent employment, and generally they have been readily taken up at fair rates. The use of large Screw Steamers has been almost entirely confined to the occasional requirements of the East India Company, who have chartered some few at from 40*l.* to 29*l.* per head. We have many large steamers in dock waiting re-engagement; several of them having returned from the East at very low rates and even in ballast. It may be mentioned as a fact likely to have an important bearing on steam property in general, that four large Screws have recently changed hands at *about one-third their original cost*, namely—about 12*l.* per ton, B. M. engines included; latterly, however, we have more inquiries from buyers.”

VIII.—*Foreign and Colonial Loans Negotiated in London.*

During 1858 four important Foreign Loans have been placed on the London Money Market.

On 1st April, ('58) the tenders for the first issue of 5 Millions Indian 4 per cent. Debentures were opened, and on 17th August ('58,) tenders were opened for the 3,579,000*l.* required to complete the 8 Millions authorized by Parliament,—the issue prices ranging, in each case, between 97 and 99 per cent.

In May ('58,) Messrs. Rothschild secured, for the Government of Brazil, a Loan of 1,556,500*l.* in a 4½ per cent. stock at 96 per cent.

On 30th August ('58,) Messrs. Dent, Palmer, and Co., announced a Turkish Loan of 5 Millions in a 6 per cent. stock, at 85 per cent. The 3 Millions offered in the first instance were at once taken up, and between that date and 8th October ('58,) 1,280,000*l.* of the second series was subscribed for, making an aggregate of 4,280,000*l.*

Lastly, at the end of November ('58,) Messrs. Baring successfully launched a Chilean 4¾ per cent. Loan to the extent of 1,554,800*l.*, at 92 per cent.

These four Loans amount to, say 14 Millions sterling, and have all been paid up with the exception of about 2¾ millions, falling due early in 1859.

On the 7th January, 1859, the first 1,000,000*l.* of the Debentures issued by the Colony of Victoria for Railway Works were tendered for in London at 107. The Debentures bear 6 per cent. per ann., redeemable at the end of 25 years.

At the commencement of 1858 the Rate of Discount at the Bank of England was 8 *per cent.*, and about 7 per cent. in the market; the Total Bullion being 11,454,000*l.*, and the Banking Reserve 6,064,000*l.* There have been six alterations of the Rate of Discount in 1858, as follows:—

Date.	Rate.	Total Bullion.	Bank Reserve.
		£	£
1858.— 7th Jan.	6 per cent.	12,643,000	7,088,000
„ 14th „	5 „	13,357,	7,540,
„ 28th „	4 „	15,398,	9,418,
„ 4th Feb.	3½ „	15,793,	9,370,
„ 11th „	3 „	16,574,	10,617,
„ 9th Dec.	2½ „	18,921,	12,731,

IX.—*Summary of Results.—Prices since 1851.*

1. IN the annexed Table (A), a statement is given of the whole-sale prices in London and Manchester of *forty-one* commodities which enter in the largest degree into the consumption of this country, either as articles of food and comfort, or as materials of manufactures. This Table is compiled from the same sources, and arranged in the same manner as the corresponding Table in the Sixth volume of the History of Prices. In Table (B) the fluctuations presented in (A) are reduced to the more convenient form of Proportionate Results founded on the Radix of 100.

But before referring to the conclusions suggested by these two Tables, we may state as follows the general inferences which seem to be justified by the preceding reports of the results and character of the Trade of 1858.

1. The year 1858 has been a year of cheap Corn, arising chiefly from the two abundant Harvests in this country of '57 and '58; but also arising in no small measure from the vast quantity of nearly 5 Millions of Quarters of Foreign Wheat imported—notwithstanding that the average Gazette price of the year ('58) is not more than 44s. 6d. per Imperial Quarter.

2. In the great articles of Colonial and Tropical Produce—Tea, Sugar, Coffee, Spices,—there has been some recovery during 1858 from the point to which prices fell after the crisis of 1857; but that recovery has not been very decided. The consumption has been large, steady, and extending; but it has been promptly met by large supplies.

3. As regards the import of the Raw Materials of Sheep's Wool, Silk, Oils, and Timber—the article in which the recovery of Prices has been most complete is Sheep's Wool. Silk, Oils, and Timber have not risen in price: but the consumption has been beyond that of any former year.

4. In the Iron Trade prices are considerably lower at the close than at the commencement of the year.

5. In Cotton Manufactures the price of the Raw Material is without important change; and the reports describe the Manufacturers as carrying on for some months past a more profitable trade than for many years past. The same activity prevails in the Woollen, Worsted, and Carpet Trades.

6. The Shipowners complain loudly of low freights and the superabundance of Ships.

These are the results of 1858. Let us now look, by aid of the Tables (A) and (B), into the variation of Prices during the Eight Years between Jan. 1851 and Jan. 1859. We find, then,

7. That the great articles—Tea, Sugar, Coffee, and Tobacco—after attaining in July 1857 a range of prices exceeding by one-half or two-thirds the prices of Jan. 1851, have in Jan. 1859 again sunk, as a whole, to a point rather below than above that at which they were eight years ago.

8. That Wheat also is but a trifle dearer in Jan. '59 than in Jan. 1851.

9. That, on the other hand, Butcher's Meat is full 27 per cent. dearer.

10. That Silk, Flax, Hemp, Sheep's Wool, Tallow, Oils, and Leather, after rising in July 1857 to a point 30 to 80 per cent. above the prices of Jan. 1851, have fallen in Jan. 1859 to quotations which range at, say 15 to 20 per cent. above the prices which prevailed eight years ago.

11. That the same remark applies generally to Copper, Iron, Lead, and Tin.

12. That, on the other hand, Raw Cotton, Indigo, and Timber are as cheap or cheaper now than in the early part of 1851.

We may, perhaps, so far found a generalisation on these results as to say—That at the close of the Eight Years terminated with 31st Dec., 1858, the course of the markets, as corrected by the Crisis of the autumn of 1857, has not led to materially higher prices in those articles—such as Colonial and Tropical Produce of Vegetable origin—the production of which admits of comparatively easy extension:—that, on the other hand, markedly higher prices have been established for articles—such as Butcher's Meat, Sheep's Wool, Tallow, Leather, and several kinds of Metal—an enlarged production of which requires the lapse of time.

We must not fail to mark well, that the decline of Prices since the summer of 1857 has been almost as striking as the rise of Prices during the six years preceding that time; and we learn by the preceding reports that these reduced prices have been the accompaniment of brisk and profitable trade.

The year 1859 opens with six advantages in its favour.

First. The cost of living as regards the Working Classes is less ;
Bread, Sugar, Tea, Coffee, Fruits, are cheap.

Second. Raw Materials of Manufacture are by comparison cheap.

Third. The Rate of Discount is low.

Fourth. New and Extensive Markets in the East are being opened.

Fifth. Cheap Tonnage has at length removed one of the important causes of high prices during recent years.

And Sixth. Rapid means of intelligence and transit now coming into use in some of the largest and richest regions of earth hitherto almost inaccessible, are enlarging every day the sphere open to enterprise, invention, and industry.

(A.)—*Wholesale Prices of Commodities in LONDON and MANCHESTER.*

(I.) COLONIAL AND TROPICAL PRODUCE (FOOD).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dates.	Coffee.	Sugar.		Rum.	Tea.	Tobacco.	Butter.
	Jamaica, Fine Ord. to Mid. (Bond.)	Brit. Plan. Yellow. (Bond.)	Bengal Good Yellow. (Bond.)	Jamaica, 15 c. 15. 0 p. (Bond.)	Congou, Com. to Mid. (Bond.)	Virginian Leaf. (Bond.)	Waterford.
	Per Cwt. s. d.	Per Cwt. s. d.	Per Cwt. s. d.	Per Gal. s. d.	Per lb. d.	Per lb. d.	s.
'51—1 Jan.	53 to 58	26 to 28	34 to 46	2 6 to 2 8	12	4½ to 10	80
'53—1 July	50 „ 58	20 „ 23	27 „ 31	2 8., 2 10	12	2½ „ 7½	84
'57—1 „	68 „ 80	40 „ 44	46 „ 49	4 6 „ 4 9	15	8 „ 11	100
'58—1 Jan.	50 „ 62	23 „ 26	33 „ 36	3 8 „ 4 —	13	7½ „ 10	110
'59—1 „	56 „ 71	22 „ 26	32 „ 35	3 — „ 3 4	11	5 „ 10	105

(II.) WHEAT (ENGLAND AND WALES):—AND BUTCHER'S MEAT AT NEWGATE MARKET.

	8	9	10	11	12	13
Dates.	Wheat.	Beef.		Mutton.		Pork.
	Gazette Monthly Average.	Inferior Mid.	Prime Large.	Mid.	Prime.	Large.
	P. Imp. Qr. s. d.	Per 8 lbs. d. d.	Per 8 lbs. d. d.	Per 8 lbs. d. d.	Per 8 lbs. d. d.	Per 8 lbs. d. d.
'51—1 Jan.	38 1	28 to 30	32 to 36	34 to 42	44 to 46	30 to 42
'53—1 July	44 11	40 „ 42	42 „ 44	46 „ 50	52 „ 56	40 „ 44
'57—1 „	63 4	36 „ 40	42 „ 46	40 „ 46	48 „ 52	42 „ 48
'58—1 Jan.	48 7	42 „ 44	46 „ 50	42 „ 48	50 „ 58	42 „ 52
'59—1 „	40 6	42 „ 44	46 „ 48	44 „ 50	52 „ 56	36 „ 44

(III.) RAW MATERIALS OF MANUFACTURE.

	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Dates.	Cotton.	Silk, Raw.	Flax.	Hemp.	Sheep's Wool.			Dyes.	
	Upland Fair.	Cosimby.	Friesland.	St. Petersb. Clean.	Eng. South Down.	South Australia Lambs.	South Australia Locks.	Logwood, Jama.	Indigo, Bengal.
	Per lb. d. s.	Per lb. s. s.	Per Ton. £ £	Per Ton. £	P.240lbs. £	Per lb. d. d.	Per lb. d. d.	Per Ton. s. s.	Per lb. s. d. s. d.
'51—1 Jan.	7½	9 to 17	38 to 46	30	14	18	10 to 14	70 to 80	3 to 6 10
'53—1 July	6½	12,, 15	42,, 55	35½	19½	17	7,, 17	105,, 119	4 9,, 7 8
'57—1 ,,	8½	17,, 30	50,, 65	35	19	18 to 26	13,, 19	105	1 8,, 7 8
'58—1 Jan.	6¼	14,, 22	,,	29	13	16,, 21	7,, 16	,,	2 6,, 10 -
'59—1 ,,	7	12,, 20	,,	29	19	18,, 25	5,, 16	,,	1 -,, 8 -

	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Dates.	Oils.			Timber.		Tallow.	Leather.	Saltpetre.	Ashes.
	Seal.	Olive. Gallipoli.	Palm.	Dantzic and Memel.	Canadian Yellow Fine.	St. Peters- burgh 1st Y. C.	English Butts, 28-36.	English Refined.	Canadn. Pearl.
	p. 252 gls. £	per ton. £	per ton. £	per load. s. s.	per load. s. s.	per cwt. s.	Per lb. s. s.	Per Cwt. s. s.	Per Cwt. s.
'51—1 Jan.	37	43	29	60 to 70	55 to 60	38	12 to 23	27 to 29	30
'53—1 July	33½	71	36	72,, 80	70,, 85	49	14,, 22	24,, 28	28
'57—1 ,,	46	58	47	57,, 80	75,, 85	65	24,, 30	64	45
'58—1 Jan.	39	51	40	57,, 85	70,, 75	52	20,, 27	43	36
'59—1 ,,	37	50	40	55,, 70	65,, 70	57	12,, 30	45	33

(IV.) METALS.

(V.) MANCHSTR. MKTS.

	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41
Dates.	Copper	Iron.		Lead.	Steel.	Tin.	Yarn.	Cotton Cloth.		Raw Cotton
	Tough Cake.	British Bars.	Swedish (Bond).	English Pigs.	Swedish Kegs.	English Bars in Barrels.	Mule 40, Fair, 2nd qual.	Printers' 26 in 66 Reeds, 27 yards, 4lb. 2 oz.	Gold End Sheetings, 40 in 66 Reeds, 37½ yards, 8 lb. 12 oz.	Upland, Good, Fair.
	Per Ton. £	Per Ton. £	Per Ton. £	Per Ton. £	Per Ton. £	Per Ton. £	d.	s. d.	s. d.	Per lb. d.
'51—I Jan.	84	6	11¾	17½	15	84	12½	5 2	10 10	8
'53—1 July	107½	9½	11½	24½	17	108	10¼	5 -	9 6	6½
'57—1 ,,	117	8¼	16	25	21	143	12½	3 4½	9 10½	8½
'58—1 Jan.	107	7¼	15	23	22	109	10½	4 7½	8 7½	6½
'59—1 ,,	107	7	13	22	20	124	12½	5 4½	9 7½	6½

(VI.) CIRCULATION AND RATE OF INTEREST.

	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
Dates.	Bank Note Circulation.			Rate of Interest.		Reserve of Bk. of Eng.	
	Bank of England.	Country Banks, Gt. Britain.	Total.	Bank of England. Minm.	Lombard Street.	Total Bullion.	Banking Reserve.
	Mlms. £	Mlms. £	Mlms. £	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Mlms. £	Mlms. £
'51—1 Jan.	20·3	9·5	29·8	3	2 $\frac{3}{4}$	14·6	9·0
'53—1 July	24·2	10·5	34·7	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ —4	18·0	8·5
'57—1 „	20·5	10·7	31·2	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ — $\frac{3}{4}$	11·6	6·3
'58—1 Jan.	20·6	9·4	30·0	6	4—5	12·6	7·6
'59—1 „	21·7	10·4	32·0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	2—2 $\frac{1}{2}$	19·1	12·7

(B.)—Prices 1851-9—PROPORTIONATE RESULTS—deduced from the preceding Table (A) on the basis of representing by 100 the prices prevailing in JAN. 1851.

(I.) COLONIAL OR TROPICAL PRODUCE.

(II.) WHEAT AND BUTCHER'S MEAT.

(III.) RAW MATERIALS—TEXTILE.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Dates.	Coffee, 1.	Sugar, 2-3.	Tea, 5.	Tobacco, 6.	Wheat, 8.	Butchers' Meat, 9-13.	Cotton, 14.	Silk, 15.	Flax and Hemp, 16-17.	Sheeps' Wool, 18-20.	
'51—1 Jan.	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
'53—1 July	97	76	100	69	118	125	82	104	117	110	
'57—1 „	133	134	125	131	166	121	105	181	128	130	
'58—1 Jan.	101	88	108	121	128	130	79	138	120	98	
'59—1 „	114	86	93	103	106	127	89	123	120	116	

(IV.) RAW MLS. DYES & OILS.

(V.) TIMBER, &C.

(VI.) METALS.

	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Dates.	Indigo, 22.	Oils, 23-25.	Timber, 26-27.	Tallow, 28.	Leather, 29.	Copper, 33.	Iron, 34-35.	Lead, 36.	Tin, 38.
'51—1 Jan.	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
'53—1 July	126	129	125	129	103	128	118	140	128
'57—1 „	95	139	121	171	154	139	137	143	170
'58—1 Jan.	127	119	117	137	134	127	125	131	130
'59—1 „	91	116	106	150	120	127	112	126	148

Note.—The construction of this Table (B) will be easily understood. For example—Col. 6, Wheat, represents the fluctuations in the Gazette price of Wheat, according to the actual prices given in (A), Col. 8. The price of 38s. 1d., as at 1st Jan. 1851, is represented in (B) by 100—and the prices of the four subsequent dates by corresponding additions to or abatements from 100. Thus, at 1st July, '57, the 100 had become 166. To arrive at the *per* abatement variation from year to year, it is obvious that the *differences* must be measured, not against 100, but against the number placed against the first of the years compared. Thus, the *fall* in the prices of Wheat between 1st July, '57, and 1st Jan., '58, was not (166-120) 46 per cent.—but 27 *per cent.*—or the proportion borne by 46 to 166.